DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 151 712 CG 012 339

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TITLE Is Choice and Exchange Theory the Key?
PUB DATE 12 Oct 77
NOTE 38p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Council on Family Relations (San Diego, California, October 12-15, 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Theories; Beliefs; *Decision Making; *Family (Sociological Unit); *Human Relations; *Parent Child Relationship; *Social Exchange Theory; Social Science Research; State of the Art Reviews
IDENTIFIERS *Choice and Exchange Theory

ABSTRACT

This paper takes a step toward the construction of a general social theory. As the author points out, such a theory must deal with the interplay of social organizations, social movements and social institutions, and the interaction between them and individuals. The author hints that a theory of choice and exchange may some day meet these requirements. He sees choice and exchange theory as a useful framework into which many present research findings may be integrated. In this paper, he applies it to family situations, and demonstrates that it can provide a basis for deducing testable hypotheses concerning the behavior of families. He also shows that it can address issues at the macro level, and be used to derive research hypotheses to test broad theoretical propositions. (Author/BP)

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IS CHOICE AND EXCHANGE THEORY THE KEY?

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Burgess Award Address to the National Council on Family Relations, San Diego, California, October 12, 1977.

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As societies become more complex, with greater and greater division of labor, and as they change more and more rapidly, the need for a valid theory of human behavior increases. As the behavioral sciences proliferate, with larger and larger numbers of researchers, practitioners and program directors, the sheer volume of research and programs calls for general principles which can be utilized in their systematization. With these increases, intellectual and policy confusion grows apace, and the need for general theory to guide research, ameliorative programs and administrative decisions becomes ever more urgent. Research and programs based on personal hunches and/or *ad hoc* theorizing seem to lead nowhere except to greater confusion -- a confusion which can hardly continue indefinitely.

Alternative Approaches

The delineation of Conceptual Frameworks was a modest effort at sorting and cataloging research and concepts into a few major intellectual systems (Hill and Hansen, 1960; Christensen, 1964; Nye and Berardo, 1966). However, these works become incomplete with the emergence of so-called Exchange Theory, Conflict Theory, Systems Theory and Transaction Analysis. Since the primary capability of Conceptual Frameworks is to sort and label the work that has been done, they are not and could not be adequate to the task of predicting and rationalizing social organization and human behavior. The most ambitious of these conceptual frameworks, Structure-Functionalism, seems to have failed to materialize into a general theory because of the lack of predictive substance-free propositions which could lead to the research hypotheses necessary for testing theory.

Three other recent developments have helped advance behavioral science, yet, in my estimation, fall short of the theory needed. The first of these was stimulated by Zetterberg's work (1965). In this approach, the would-be theorist collects all the research propositions related to a given

variable. Having listed these indivually, he/she begins the task of retroduction -- the search for broader concepts which encompass a number of empirical indicators. Having developed a smaller number of more general propositions from a large number of specific ones, the process is repeated until a level of generality as high as possible is reached. These "theoretical" propositions which are retroduced can then become the basis for deducing additional, testable hypotheses (*i.e., Bartz and Nye*, 1971).

A second strategy involves abstracting and interrelating a group of propositions dealing with a given issue. There is no effort to "retroduce" to more general levels of abstraction, but the propositions are interrelated. The relationships between existent propositions can become the basis for deducing additional, testable hypotheses. This strategy is outlined and employed in a recent volume on family theory (Burr, 1973) and is employed extensively in a forthcoming volume on family theory (Burr, et al., 1978).

A third strategy which might be mentioned is so-called "Causal Analysis." This, in my judgment, is essentially a very refined system of data analysis. It qualifies as theory because the researcher is forced to state the direction of causality between each interrelated variable in his/her analysis. I do not think this theoretical approach organizes knowledge nor does it seem to be a particularly fruitful source of new hypotheses. Thus, my initial observation is that it is a refined and sophisticated method of data analysis rather than a theory or a method of theory development.

All of the above add to behavioral science but tend to be fragmentary. The first two synthesize and organize within a limited substantive domain. The third probably adds more to empirical research than to theory development. If we had nothing more general, we would be fortunate to have these, but in complex and fast-changing societies in which individuals, organizations and institutions feel acute stresses and strains, and in which uncounted social

programs are mounted to meet these stresses and strains, a more general theory for rationalization, explanation, and prediction is needed.

CHOICE AND EXCHANGE

Social Exchange theory has been shown to rationalize and predict "elementary social behavior" (Thibaut and Kelley, 1959; Homans, 1961; and Blau, 1964). Burns (1973), Ekeh (1974), and Heath (1976) have suggested that it can go beyond face-to-face behavior in dyads and other small groups to address normative behavior and social organization. Can it? Is this theoretical system capable of developing into a truly general theory which can address behavior from that of individuals to the macro level of social movements? To answer these questions it is necessary to understand something of the body of concepts and assumptions which has usually been called Exchange Theory (Homans, 1961). However, this label has been something of a problem in and of itself. Thibaut and Kelley (1959) make it clear that rewards and costs can and do accrue from sources other than interpersonal interaction. Thus, a term specific to interaction in the dyad is not a very good identificaiton for a theory with much greater potential. Simpson (1972) has made the point that interpersonal exchange is a part of the broader theory, but only a part.

Given what I think is the inappropriateness of the exchange theory label, I have wanted to use the term "maximum profit" theory to correspond with Thibaut's and Kelley's concept of Goodness and Outcome. However, this label seems too suggestive of the market place to find ready acceptance. Fortunately, Heath (1976) has proposed the label Rational Choice and Social Exchange. While Heath's development of the theory may be criticized -- he talks about theories of choice and theories of exchange rather than a single general theory -- he uses the same concepts of rewards and costs in both sets of theories. One may, of course, talk of a theory of marital stability or a theory of family violence, rather than a general theory of choice and exchange applied to as many substantive concerns as may interest one. The more important concern is whether

or not a general theory exists which has a common core of concepts and assumptions and one or more very general, substance-free propositions which can be used to deduce less general substantive propositions, which in turn, suggests testable research hypotheses. Heath puts into practice the broad concepts of Reward, Cost and Goodness of Outcomes which Thibaut and Kelley (1959) delineated almost two decades ago and to which Simpson (1972) makes passing mention in his more recent review.

While Choice and Exchange are frequently intertwined, it is not that difficult to make a distinction. Perhaps the most familiar example is in the decision (i.e. of a professor) to take one of several alternative positions or to change positions. The most obvious choice is in salary. Are salaries equal or does one have an advantage? What are the opportunities to do research and write (frequently symbolized by teaching load)? What kind of a community is it for rearing children? How are the schools? Is it a safe community? What is the smog level? These costs and rewards <u>are all better</u> conceptualized as Choice than as Exchange. Exchange, however, may enter as an anticipated reward or cost. A department or other unit with a reputation as having very congenial relationships among members is viewed as supplying rewards to its members just as one characterized by factions and chronic conflict will ordinarily be viewed as one exacting costs or failing to supply an average level of rewards. If one knows people in the department he/she may anticipate rewards or costs in interacting with them.

In some transactions it may make little difference whether one uses the term Choice or Exchange. For example, after meeting and interacting with new acquaintances, decisions are made which continue the relationship or allow it to lapse. One can say "I enjoy visiting with the Browns," (in effect, let's continue Exchange with them). Or as Choice, one may say, "we can entertain about five couples, which five do we prefer; do we include the Browns?"

Perhaps within a relationship the concept of Exchange is more useful than that of Choice. We can think, "we did what I wanted to do this weekend (my spouse didn't care much for it), so next weekend we should do what she/he wants to do." Or, it may take a negative turn. A neighbor may have been doing something especially annoying, so we think "how can I reciprocate and do something to frustrate him?" Burns (1973) includes exchanges of Cost as one of four basic types of exchange. Of course, the concept of Choice may enter here, too. The person decides whether or not he/she will retaliate or endure the cost of the neighbor's behavior. After all, to engage in a continuing feud with a neighbor is to anticipate a continuing series of costs over time.

The concepts of both Choice and Exchange seem to have usefulness. Both are based on the same substance-free concepts. Heath does define Choice in one way that I am not prepared to accept. He refers to it as Rational Choice. I feel that many choices are made without the individual having considered all the consequences or carefully weighing the goodness of outcomes. Such choices can be made in terms of rewards and costs without, necessarily, cataloguing and evaluating all the outcomes. One may well say at a later time: that decision was not very rational because I overestimated this or that reward or overlooked that cost. However, this does not invalidate the idea of choice in terms of rewards and costs as perceived at that moment.

Thus, it appears that Choice and Exchange Theory is a great advance over Exchange Theory. Both are involved in most decisions. In some, Choice may be the dominant process; in others, continuance of exchange or its modification may be more descriptive of the decisions.

SUBSTANCE-FREE PROPOSITIONS

A general theory must possess substance-free propositions. The most general of those Choice and Exchange propositions we would formalize as follows:

1. Human beings seek rewards and avoid costs to maximize their Goodness of Outcomes (profits).
2. Costs being equal, individuals will choose the alternative which supplies or is expected to supply the most rewards.
3. Rewards being equal, individuals will choose the alternative which exacts the fewest costs.
4. Immediate outcomes being equal, individuals will choose those alternatives which promise better long-term outcomes.
5. Long-term outcomes being perceived as equal, individuals will choose alternatives providing better immediate outcomes.

Choice and Exchange theorists have identified a few substance-free sources of rewards and costs which are useful (or potentially useful) as a source of hypotheses. These include the assumption that social approval is a generalized culture-free reward. Therefore, a sixth proposition would be:

6. Costs and other rewards being equal, individuals will choose the alternative which supplies or can be expected to supply the most social approval. (Or they will choose the alternative which promises the least social disapproval.)

It seems equally clear that autonomy is a generalized reward because, other variables remaining equal, if one is autonomous, she/he can participate in rewarding activities and decline to participate in costly or unrewarding ones. Therefore:

7. Costs and other rewards being equal, individuals will choose statuses which provide the most autonomy.

In a society in which many exchanges are made with the use of money, it becomes a generalized reward. Therefore:

8. Costs and other rewards remaining equal, individuals will choose activities and positions which provide the greatest

financial remuneration and/or the smallest financial expenditures.

Theorists have determined that it is rewarding to have others agree with one's opinion and values. It is costly to have one's opinions and values rejected. This might be considered part of the social approval proposition (Proposition 6) but it may be desirable to state it as a separate proposition.

9. Costs and other rewards being equal, individuals choose associates and friends with opinions and values which agree with their own and try to avoid those who consistently disagree with them.

The above propositions are considered to be general in application and substance. If this is so, then they should apply in friendship and recreational groups, in families, or in religious, economic or political organizations. They should, with the exception of 8, be culture free; as applicable in Nigeria as in the Netherlands, or in the United States of Brazil as in the United States of North America.

LEVELS OF APPLICATION

Non-normative Contexts

The application of the theory to the modification of individual behavior has been extensive, i.e., to reduce disruptive and increase productive behavior in the classroom (Chadwich and Day, 1971); to modify schizophrenic behavior (Lloyd and Garlington, 1968); and to counsel spouses (Rappaport and Harrell, 1972; Wills and Weiss, 1974). From these examples and innumerable others, it is clear that contingent increases in rewards can modify behavior, sometimes to a startling degree. To these should be added the extensive research of Small Group behavioral scientists who have applied its basic concepts to a very wide range of problems (Emerson, 1972).

These analyses are, in general, at the level at which Homans directed his efforts -- at "elementary social behavior." They involve the manipulation of rewards and/or costs and the measurement of changes in behavior. This very large volume of research has produced impressive supportive evidence that humans are, as Simpson (1972) observes, reward-seeking, cost-avoiding organisms.

Choice and Exchange in the Natural Setting

Few would disagree that behavior can be changed by the manipulation of rewards and costs or that in relatively nonnormative casual relationship, that goodness of outcomes influences decisions to enter or remain in relationships. However, some would contend that the theory is largely or entirely limited to the explanation of such "elementary" behaviors and has little, if any, explanatory power for behavior or attitudes beyond them. Specifically, some would dispute that Choice and Exchange Theory has much explanatory power for the analysis of husband-wife, or parent-child relationships.

These assumptions could have resulted from equating the scope of the theory with the scope of its application by Homans , Thibaut and Kelley and some who followed them. However, the concepts and propositions of the theory are broad enough to include normative behavior and a range of indirect as well as direct exchanges. What seems to be required is the application of Choice and Exchange concepts and propositions to behavior and beliefs in normative, as well as nonnormative settings.

Whereas students of the family have spawned a number of interesting mini-theories which could be labeled Exchange Theory (we will mention some of these later), they have been surprisingly slow to plan studies with testable hypotheses deduced from this theoretical system. There have been some studies, however, for instance, Nye and McLaughlin (1976) recently reported the results of a study in which the idea was tested that spouses reward each other through the quality of their enactment of their familial roles. They advanced a series of hypotheses

predicting that the more competent the role enactment of one's spouse, the more likely one would be satisfied with his/her marriage. Johnson (1978) built on the above research to include costs as well as rewards and to include preferred division of labor as well as role competence in the theory. We shall not attempt a review of family research conducted in this theoretical perspective, since the present objective is to extend the range of the theory rather than a review of previous work. However, a number of testable hypotheses derived from Choice and Exchange Theory which indicate the versatility of the theory for dealing with behavior and beliefs within the family will be proposed below.

DEDUCTIONS FROM CHOICE AND EXCHANGE THEORY

Intra-familial Hypotheses

The position has been taken above that Choice and Exchange theory can provide a basis for deducing testable hypotheses concerning family behavior. It is the purpose of this section to illustrate the range of the theory in the family domain.

William Goode introduced a theory concerning the subjects of violence and child abuse in his Burgess Award Address. He suggested (1971) that men with few verbal skills are more likely to lose verbal contests and, as one alternative, resort to violence. This concept may be formally stated in two hypotheses:

> The more the verbal skills of one spouse exceed those of the other, (relevant variable constant), the more likely the other will, in progress of an argument, resort to violence.
>
> The larger the proportion of verbal arguments won by one spouse (relevant variables constant) the more likely that the other will resort to force.

Since spousal violence is proscribed by law and negatively sanctioned by peer group disapproval it is more likely to occur in conditions of relative isolation. Hypotheses taking this into account can be offered:

The greater the number of relatives of the spouse that live in the immediate area (other variables constant) the less likely the other will resort to violence.

The greater the social interaction of the couple with neighbors, (other variables constant) the less likely a spouse will employ violence.

Turning to child abuse, the literature suggests that a common cause of abuse is overestimation of the capabilities of the child. In Choice and Exchange terms, the performance level of the child may be, in one or more respects,below the Comparison Level of the parent. Since parents usually cannot leave the parental relationship, this evaluation of the child's conduct leads to frustration and anger on the part of the parent. The parent may abuse the child, either as a means to modify its behavior or to inflict costs on one who has (in the parent's perception) inflicted costs on the parent. This can be formulated as a testable hypothesis.

The more the expectations of the parent exceed the capabilities of the child, the more likely the parent will abuse the child.

Since child abuse is proscribed and the abusing parent can anticipate sanctions if his/her behavior becomes known, it is more likely to occur in situations of greater isolation. The presence of the other parent, kin in the area or frequent interaction with neighbors increase the likelihood that abuse will be known. Other hypotheses could be:

Child abuse is more likely in single parent than in two-parent families.

Child abuse is less likely in families which have frequent interaction with relatives and neighbors.

There are other hypotheses possible but these are, obviously, only illustrations of propositions deducible from the theory -- not a complete treatment of violence. For a moment, let us shift to an unrelated area of family behavior, correlates of maternal employment. All studies have shown

that the younger the age of the youngest child, the less likely that the mother is in paid employment. The usual explanation offered is that, because of the greater needs of younger children for supervision and nurturance and the stronger disapproval of the mother working, the costs are greater for mothers of very young children and that these are the reasons for low rates of female employment. Two fragments of research suggest that differences in rewards also may be involved. In recent research (Gecas, 1976) a large proportion of parents reported that they would not share the child-care and socialization roles even if a well-trained person was available to them without cost. They identify with these roles and apparently value them positively. (This contrasts sharply with the housekeeper role, which most would gladly share.) A similarly suggestive development is reported by Tiger and Shepher (1975) in that in 25 Israeli Kibbutz women have pushed through a provision which permits them to leave their work for an hour each morning, take their children out of school and spend "an hour of love" with them. This interrupts both work and educational schedules, but they choose the affective rewards over instrumental achievement. Again, this indicates positive rewards form children. Choice and Exchange theory assumes that approval is a generalized reward. I suggest that approval is more unqualified from young children than any other source (including older children). Therefore, it can be hypothesized that:

> Mothers receive more unqualified approval from younger than from older children.
>
> Mothers receive more unqualified approval from young children than from any other category of people.

If the above hypotheses are correct, then mothers of young children may stay out of the Labor Force less because of the costs of hiring child care or the sanctions levied by peer groups and more because small children provide more rewards at less costs than employers. This relationship will, of course, be modified by the amount of income the mother has income from sources other than her own earnings.

More space will not be taken in this relatively brief paper to deduce additional testable hypotheses, but the above illustrates the vitality and versatility of the theory. In a longer paper prepared for Volume II of Contemporary Theories About the Family (Burr, et al.,forthcoming, 1979), I offer about 100 testable hypotheses from Choice and Exchange Theory. Attention is again directed to the fact that the above hypotheses must carry the qualification "other relevant variables equal" to be theoretically meaningful, and the researcher will have to take some care in controlling such variables as might provide a spurious relationship in these hypotheses or conceivably might hide a meaningful one.

CHOICE AND EXCHANGE AT MACRO LEVELS

For a theory to qualify as truly general, it must be able to rationalize and predict relationships between social groups and between social institutions. In the past, Sociology has relied largely on Structure-Functionalism to deal with relationships between large social units. However, it is probably correct to say that most behavioral scientists feel that Structure-Functionalism has not been able to develop many or very crucial hypotheses.
Probably, most regard it as a conceptual framework -- a way of looking at society rather than a major set of explanations. The question we wish to pose here is -- can Choice and Exchange theory improve the prospects for explaining society and anticipating social change?

First, rewards and costs will be illustrated by some events which took place a decade ago. In the latter part of the 1960s a very mild. legal social movement to provide equal civil rights and equal occupational opportunity for blacks gave way to increasing militancy, perhaps best labeled, Black Liberation. This movement gradually repudiated the collaboration and assistance of whites and increasingly turned from seeking opportunity for blacks to demanding immediate equality in income, power and prestige positions. Frequently it

substituted violent for nonviolent means. After several years, the center of gravity reversed itself and again focused on legal, nonviolent means and cooperation with sympathetic whites. One black spokesman explained the change by saying that about all the militant methods and the resort to violence achieved was to get the black leadership killed or sent up for long prison terms. Turning from violence to political means, black leadership helped to elect blacks as mayors in several large cities and was instrumental in bringing down a national administration which it judged unsympathetic.

To restate these events in Choice and Exchange terms, it would apppear that many black leaders in the mid-1960's were dissatisfied with the rate of change toward racial equality (below their Comparison Levels) and decided that demands for immediate equality, rejection of white leadership, and the selective use of violence would produce greater profits (the Alternatives promised more profitable outcomes). The change eliminated the white leadership of the movement for equality and created leadership positions for blacks. While the change to aggressive, sometimes violent strategies provided some rewards, such as more positions of leadership, it also led to the death or imprisonment of many black leaders. Thus, the costs of the new strategy were larger than expected. Aggressive, violent methods led to a swing toward political conservatism in the society with a national leadership which had supported black civil rights and occupational advancement replaced by one unwilling to take initiative in that direction (a reduction in rewards). In some of the larger cities white mayors were elected on the basis of being "tough" on violence.

Conversely, having evicted the white leadership from the civil rights movement, blacks were generally able to retain these positions (rewards) while decreasing their costs by emphasizing more conventional, legitimized political activity, thus decreasing costs. By "rejoining the legitimate world" they

achieved considerable power in major cities, in Congress and with the national administration (rewards). Recently, some black spokesmen have voiced the position that the national administration is not moving rapidly enough with programs to improve the status of poor blacks and other poor people, and that blacks may decide to "raise a little Hell" to modify this situation (increase the costs of the national administration). Thus, it appears that the strategies of social movements are guided by their perception of the relative rewards and costs of alternative action in somewhat the same fashion as individuals choose between alternative courses of action.

Propositions at the Macro Level

Choice and Exchange theory at the macro level is still, to my knowledge, undeveloped, but I am arguing that challenging and useful hypotheses can be developed. First, can it anticipate the influence of a new intellectual ideology or paradigm -- for example Transaction Analysis. It is my perception that this system of ideas, propogated through low cost paperbacks and through workshops and seminars conducted largely outside of the Universities, in changing American Society, including but not limited to the family. Because of the diffuseness of these ideas, I will focus on the works of one person, Thomas Harris and of one of his works, I'm O.K., You're O.K. In the brief space available here, oversimplification cannot be avoided. The reader especially interested in this argument may want to read or reread his volume.

Harris (1973) basically takes the position that everyone is O.K. or at least would be if they thought that they were. He leaves it to the individual to examine his/her social world, determine his/her own values and act on them. While he does not entirely reject rules, regulations, religion and/or other norms, he relegates them to the despised category of "Parent." Harris would have the individual determine the "reality" of the situation surrounding his

choices, then "do his own thing" on the basis of this perception. He goes further and advises that one has the right and duty to oppose individuals, organizations or rules and regulations which obstruct his/her course of action. While one might be very enlightened and considerate of the rights and needs of others, it does not bind the individual to any such considerations. The basis message is to determine one's own goals, then "do your own thing." This emphasis is heightened by taking a generally hostile attitude toward authority (including parenthood). As a safequard, he proposes that the worth of every person be taken into account in charting one's own course of action.[1]

Philosophically, this explication of Transaction Analysis seems defensable; however I would expect individuals to take such parts of it as suits their convenience, ignoring those admonitions which might prevent them from following courses of action promising rewards for them. This can be framed into a very broad proposition, which is presently lacking in empirical verification.

> The net effect of Transaction Analysis on society is an increase in unlimited individualism.[2]

Stated in these terms, the proposition probably cannot be tested. If it is true, then individuals who have been exposed to Transaction Analysis and who view it favorably, should be more likely to hold attitudes supportive of and/or take irresponsible actions. This can be stated as a testable hypothesis, although to my knowledge it has not been tested.

> Other variables constant, persons who have been exposed to and hold favorable attitudes toward Transaction Analysis are more likely to hold permissive attitudes toward and more likely to engage in unlimited individualistic behavior.

It may be self-evident that this paradigm is destructive of the norms whether these are informal, outside of the legal structure, or are imbedded in it. The norms are part of the "villian" of the piece, the Parent. Therefore at the societal level, we propose two propositions so general that they cannot be directly tested:

The greater the influence of Transaction Analysis in a society the greater the strain on societal norms.

Other variables constant, the greater the influence of Transaction Analysis, the greater the deviation from societal norms.

While these propositions appear to involve too much behavior to be directly testable, specific hypotheses are derivable from them. Indivisuals who have become acquainted with and accept the basic assumptions of Transaction Analysis, since they have no special respect for them, are more likely to violate the social norms, formal or informal. This should be especially true if the violation involves individuals or institutions other than face-to-face associates.

Other variables constant, persons favorable to Transaction Analysis are more likely to violate laws and informal social norms than those who reject the paradigm.

Since this paradigm exalts the needs and worth of individuals in immediate interaction and since it assumes that such individuals need to be reassured of their worth and significance, we would expect that individuals who were influenced by Transaction Analysis who are involved in profsssional and other white collar occupations (which deal with people) will devote more of their time and attention to process and less to achieving the goals of the organization Not only would such interaction processes take more time, but individuals influenced by these assumptions are more likely to devalue the organization and institution of which it is a part and, therefore, to be less committed to its stated goals.

Among judges, social workers and other professionals and administrators whose duties are to <u>enforce</u> laws and regulations, those who have accepting attitudes toward Transaction Analysis are more likely to identify with those violating laws and regulations and to provide none or very mild sanctions against them than are those who have not accepted the paradigm.

It is perhaps evident that the greater the freguency and seriousness of criminal behavior, the less freedom members of society have. That is, they must restrict their movements to avoid areas where they would be likely to be

assulted and/or robbed. Other areas which may be safe in the day time, must be avoided at night. The number of police, judges and custodial personnel must be increased to provide minimal security. Education and social service dependent on public funds are curtailed as a larger proportion is allocated to law enforcement and custodial care.

In this limited sortie into macrosociology -- an exploration of the impact of a major ideology on American society, I have hypothesized that although it contains considerable idealistic intent, Transaction Analysis increases the cost to society in general by increasing unlimited individualism, reducing the effectiveness of social control thereby requiring larger sums for law enforcement and reducing the freedom of the members of society due to increased threats to their persons and property. I want to emphasize that none of the above has been established, but that these effects can be deduced from a theory of Choice and Exchange and that some of the propositions can be tested to support or refute this general line of argument.

One additional issue will be raised. If Transaction Analysis increases societal costs without a corresponding increase in rewards for society, what can be expected to be society's response? A response is conditioned on a collective perception that this ideology is increasing societal costs. To date it appears that this perception has occurred primarily with respect to the conduct of primary schools. Test scores have and are continuing to decline. Many parent groups (and some teachers) have attributed this to a permissive ideology of "do your own thing" extended downward into the school classroom. Students may be allowed or encouraged to set their own goals and decide on classroom procedures. Parents have, in some school systems, expressed their dissatisfaction by withholding financial support to schools. Where school administrators and/or legislators are responsive to parental pressure, special examinations have been instituted to compel teachers and students to conform to traditional

educational goals. From a Theory of Choice and Exchange we would expect society to react in such ways as to arrest the increase in societal costs.

Direct or Indirect Effects?

Is it reasonable to suggest that such societal consequences and responses to them flow directly and primarily from Transaction Analysis? I will hypothesize that some are direct, others indirect. The advertisement of I'm O.K., You're O.K. reports it at the head of the best seller list for over a year -- "affecting the lives of millions." We are inclined to discount these claims considerably. Yet, something (or more reasonably, a combination of influences) is changing American Society at an unprecedented rate. We think T.A. analysis and its related philosophies have had a greater direct effect on well-educated professional and business people who have studied and in many instances discussed it. And because more highly educated people have seen and considered some of the qualifications on unrestricted individualism, their patterns of response are likely to be different. People with less education and not involved in educational programs are more likely to be exposed to and be responsive to "free floating" ideas such as "do your own thing","your values are just as good as anyone's," or "fight the establishment." We have protrayed these relationships in an impressionistic fashion in Figure I.

The theorist, of course, would like to know why this paradigm should have become influential at this point in time (if the above propositions should be supported). Ordinarily, society is able to largely contain and counteract such unlimited individualism. While establishing which aspects of the social millieu of the past decade was so hospitable goes beyond the scope of the present paper, I would suggest that three major events reduced the effectiveness of social control in the late 1960's and early 1970's: (1) The Vietnam War which was viewed as a colonial adventure by many and opposed by very large segments of the society, including many youth; (2) the corruption and opportunism of the Nixon administration which compromised the authority of the

society at the highest level; and (3) the recession brought on by the same administration in the name of combating inflation, which deprived millions of their jobs. While there may have been other events which contributed to the decline of social control, these could have been sufficient.

FAMILY IN MACROANALYSIS

In an earlier section, we have tried to show that Choice and Exchange theory can predict the behavior of family members, and in the preceding section, suggested that the adoption of basic ideologies or fragments spun off of them can increase or decrease the costs and rewards of a society including the family sector of it. Family teachers and researchers have sometimes wistfully observed that the family is a dependent variable, being affected by the other institutions but having little effect on them. This may have been true until the 1960's when the high number of children born in the 1950's reached school age, requiring a tremendous expansion of the school system and creating tens of thousands of jobs in education. During this period, the family cost the taxpayers billions of dollars. However, it provided substantial rewards to selected sectors of society. Housing and real estate experienced a boom. Those who entered education found almost unlimited job opportunities. During the 1970's, the family inflicted a different set of costs on society. The birthrate declined, leaving many empty schools and youths trained to be teachers with few opportunities for employment.

More importantly, the rate of family dissolution through divorce and the increase of unmarried parents created hundreds of thousands of dependent people, mainly children and mothers but also some children and their fathers. "The number of female headed families with children served annually by AFDC doubled between 1960 and 1967 and then doubled again by 1971" (Ross and Sawhill 1975: 101). Thus, while the population gained 19 percent, the AFDC population gained 400 percent. During this period, the number of divorces increased approximately 250 percent, so the increased divorce rate could account for

perhaps half of the increases in the number of AFDC families. An additional component of the increase is attributable to the increase in births to unmarried couples -- from 5 percent of all births in 1960 to 13 percent in 1973 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1975). Still another proportion is due to an increase in the proportion of petitions for AFDC status being accepted. The rate approved increased from 56 percent in 1960 to 74 percent in 1971 (Ross and Sawhill, 1975: 97).

Can Choice and Exchange Theory address these changes at the macro level? Space limitations do not permit an exhaustive treatment but we will try to show that the theory can address the issues. Why should a society permit these heavy increases in costs? First, the existence of readily available divorce in a society allows individuals to escape a relationship repugnant to them and to seek less costly and more rewarding relationships in remarriage or single status. But divorce and separation increases the financial costs of the family because separate quarters, utilities and the like are more costly. If people are not to lack the necessities of life, in a sizeable proportion of families some extrafamilial support is required. Thus AFDC increases the autonomy of marital couples (a reward).

Some part of the AFDC payments are required because of the failure of the absent parent to contribute anything to the support of his/her children. As a recession economy placed added strain on the federal budget, Congress reacted with a parent locator law (.U.S. Congress, 1974). This provided means for locating absent parents anywhere in the United States or even U.S. citizens living abroad. The law put pressure on the states to obtain as much support as possible from the parents. Some states strengthened their procedures for collecting child support and added additional payments to the caregiver of the child. Thus, as payments increased rapidly and reached extremely large figures, the society reacted to shift a larger part of the burden of the divorce and single parenthood from the society back to the individuals whose actions

incurred the cost.

As states provide not only effective means to collect child support but also permit one parent to be required to support the other as "caregiver" for the child, divorce and illegitimate births become increasingly expensive for the parent without custody of the child (usually the father). In states having these laws, the father not only takes on child support for 18 years with the conception of the child; he may also take on a permanent responsibility for the support of his ex-wife, since some states are requiring that the former spouse who earns more can be required to contribute to the level of living of his/her former spouse. If the wife earns more, and/or if the husband has child custody she may have the permanent financial obligation.

Few men or women are fully conversant with the facts. When they become conversant with the facts, will this further effect the structure of the family? Will men who place no strong value on children have early vasectomies or take shots to render themselves sterile? Will men insist that their wives build and maintain their earnings to the same level as the husband? Choice and Exchange theory would lead one to anticipate such changes as soon as parenthood and wife dependency are seen as prohibitively costly to men.

Can testable hypotheses be deduced from the above? One would suggest that individuals conversant with the above legislation would have different attitudes and behavior than those who are not:

> In states with provisions for garnishing the parents' wages for child support and for support for the other parent as caregiver and for contributions to the ex-spouses, men aware of these provisions are more likely to take a stronger, more positive interest in birth control <u>in and outside</u> of marriage than those unaware of them.
>
> In the above states, men aware of these provisions are more likely to insist their wives have vocational training and earn salaries equal to their own than those unaware of these provisions.
>
> In the above states, men who are aware of the above provisions are more likely to have vasectomies prior to marriage or cohabitation than those unaware of these provisions.

It seems likely that it would be difficult to locate a sample of young people who would be familiar with this new family legislation. It would probably be necessary to educate one section of a smaple, then test for attitude differences between those informed and uninformed.

In this too brief incursion into macroanalysis, we have not presented a comprehensive substantive theory. That will obviously take more time and space than is presently available. Nor, can we guarantee that the appropriate data will confirm the above hypotheses and support the broad propositions from which they are derived. What we have tried to do is to show that Choice and Exchange can address issues at the macro level and that it is possible to derive research hypotheses to test broad theoretical macro-level propositions.

MINI THEORIES AS CHOICE AND EXCHANGE

There is much theorizing which starts from the basic assumptions of Choice and Exchange Theory and employs the same ideas of rewards costs, goodness of outcomes, comparision levels, and alternatives (frequently using slightly different terms), but does not identify the mini theory as Choice and Exchange. Some of these relate to family phenomenon others to social phenomenon in general and still others to substantive domains other than the family. We see no intrinsic merit in continuing to spawn mini theories as fragments when they could as well be viewed as substantive theories within a theory of Choice and Exchange

Autonomy Theory of Sexual Permissiveness

Reiss and Miller (1978) have developed this mini-explanatory theory in which they say, "It follows from the above that if youth culture stresses the rewards of sexuality, then to the extent young people are free from constraints of the family and other adult institutions, they will be able to develop their emphasis on suxuality." They add that the greater the institutional support for permissiveness, the greater the sexual permissiveness. Nothing in this contradicts the present paradigm. Permissiveness and support decrease the costs

of intercourse among the unmarried. They likely increase the rewards, as well, since it can take place in more comfortable and private surroundings, They also note that females who place a high value on marriage and a family are less likely to be permissive. Choice and Exchange would hypothesize that these females anticipate better outcomes (the marriage they want) by exchanging sexual availability for marriage. For females who value marriage highly, their permissiveness (our hypothesis) toward nonmarital intercourse will depend on whether or not they view it as facilitating a desired marriage or endangering it.

Thus, we believe that the Reiss and Miller theory is, in essence, a mini theory of Choice and Exchange -- one which could be productively extended by a self-conscious application of choice and exchange concepts.

Orden and Bradburn· Tensions and Satisfactions

Orden and Bradburn (1969) conceptualized marital outcomes as comprised of tensions and satisfactions -- the two being unrelated. While this is more of a conceptual orientation than a theory, it seems worthwhile that their interesting research could have been as well (and perhaps better) stated as reqards and costs They offer a balance between the two which could be conceptualized as goodness of outcomes or, simply, profit.

Resource Theory of Power

Blood and Wolfe (1960) developed a mini theory in which they rationalized their research findings by suggesting that the spouse who contributes the most resources to a marriage exercises the most power in spousal decisions. This appears to be another way of saying that the spouse who contributes more rewards has the more power, which would qualify it as an incomplete Choice and Exchange theory. Of course, our present theory would suggest that ability and willingness to inflict costs should be added. Heer (1963) brought in the desirability of alternatives available to each spouse outside the marriage (Comparison Level, Alternatives). Heer indicates his indebtedness to Exchange Theory.

Permanent Availability

In this theory Farber (1964) suggested that with the decline of the influence and interest of the kinship group, couples are free to change marital partners to increase their rewards. No marriage is viewed as permanent, although some might be permanent if no more profitable alternative partner should appear. Professor Farber has indicated to me that he did not view this as an Exchange Theory but as a contribution to kinship theory. However, it fits very comfortably into a theory of Choice and Exchange. What it lacks is an adequate treatment of the costs of leaving a relationship -- of breaking up one marriage and getting into another.

Rating and Dating Hypotheses

Waller's (1937) classic proposition in bargaining in the dating period is clearly a mini Choice and Exchange theory. Each dating partner gets as much prestige as possible and, Waller hypothesizes, the one with less prestige must provide other things of value to the dating partner.

Non-family Theories as Choice and Exchange

We have raised the question of whether choice and Exchange is a truly general theory. If it is, then other theories, if they are valid, can be subsumed under it and their concepts transformed to the concepts of Choice and Exchange. Clearly, this is a task requiring more space than this entire paper. Therefore, we will offer only a few suggestions of directions in which this task might proceed.

It appears that Behavior Modification, Learning Theory, Equity Theory, and Cognitive Dissonance are special theories that fit easily into the broad concepts and assumptions of Choice and Exchange Theory. Likewise, it may be that Conflict Theory can be conceptualized as part of this broader theory (more so of Choice than Exchange). Likewise, Structure-Functional and Systems theories might be able to make the transition from conceptual frameworks to

predictive theory by the addition of the basic concepts and theoretical propositions of Choice and Exchange Theory. (Again, Choice may be more appropriate than Exchange for these theories.)

RESUME

In this limited space we have raised several issues in the expansion of what has usually been termed Exchange Theory. We have tried to show that the broad, seminal concepts of Thibaut and Kelley (1959), Levi-Straus (1969) and others permit a Theory of Choice, which includes exchange but is not limited to it. Whether there is utility in proposing the combined concepts of Choice and Exchange as does Heath (and as we have presently) remains to be seen. A Theory of Choice includes Exchange. The chief advantage of the latter seems that it is quite descriptive of some kinds of behavior included in the theory.

Our present formulation is influenced considerably by that of Anthony Heath (1976) but departs from it in that we have proposed a single theory, which can be applied to innumerable substantive domains, while Heath refers to theories of Choice and Theories of Exchange apparently preferring to think of each substantive domain as a separate theory. We believe the former position to be more parsimonious, and therefore, prefer it.

Second, we have brought together from the literature a number of very broad propositions concerning categories of rewards and costs (Propositions 1-9). With the exception of 8, we believe these to be substance and culture-free. These broad, substance and culture-free propositions are a strategic starting point for applying the theory to specific substantive issues. Hopefully, the short list of general, substance-free propositions can and will be increased.

Third, we have offered several specific, testable hypotheses concerning family variables in the domain of family violence, child abuse and choices of women between employee and/or household roles. The general objective is to show

that the theory can deduce challenging hypotheses in a variety of family domains. Here an important objective was to demonstrate that the theory is not limited to the elementary social behavior employed by Homans (1961). We think it can stimulate the "why" questions in family behavior which most often have been dealt with only on the basis of hunches.

A truly general social theory must deal with the interplay of social organizations, social movements and social institutions and the interaction between them and individuals. We have tried to show that a recent paradigm, promulgated largely outside of the universities, is changing rewards and costs of the society. Likewise, that the trend toward single status and fragmented nuclear families generates new outcomes for the society. In both instances, we find some societal responses, designed to reduce society's costs.

Finally we have suggested that a number of interesting mini theories of family behavior can be easily conceptualized as special instances of Choice and Exchange Theory. We have also raised the question of whether nonfamily theories including the general Conflict, Structure-Functional and System Theories cannot become more explanatory by formally utilizing general Choice and Exchange propositions and the substance-free concepts of the theory.

We have not addressed the challenging issues of altruistic and emotional behavior, partly because of time and space limitations. If altruistic behavior is to be addressed, it will require a broad and sophisticated explication of the theory, drawing from the concepts of generalized exchange, generalized reciprocity (Levi-Straus, 1969; Gouldner, 1961; Ekeh, 1975) and on such formulations as Burns (1973) typology; that is, Exchange in friendship groups.

To address emotional behavior, it is necessary to consider rewards and costs as they are perveived at the moment by the actors. The person who responds to a blow with a physical attack is operating in choice and exchange terms: e.g. , it is rewarding to inflict costs on one who has inflicted them on

you. Or one may resort to violence in response to some especially noxious insult, or perhaps more likely, to reply with an insult. The issue is less that one is employing rewards and costs "calculus," than that one may later decide that the rewards of a given course of action were illusionary or the costs far in excess of the rewards. Altruism and emotional behavior seem, substantively, to mount the most formidable challenge to the assumption that Choice and Exchange is a truly general theory.

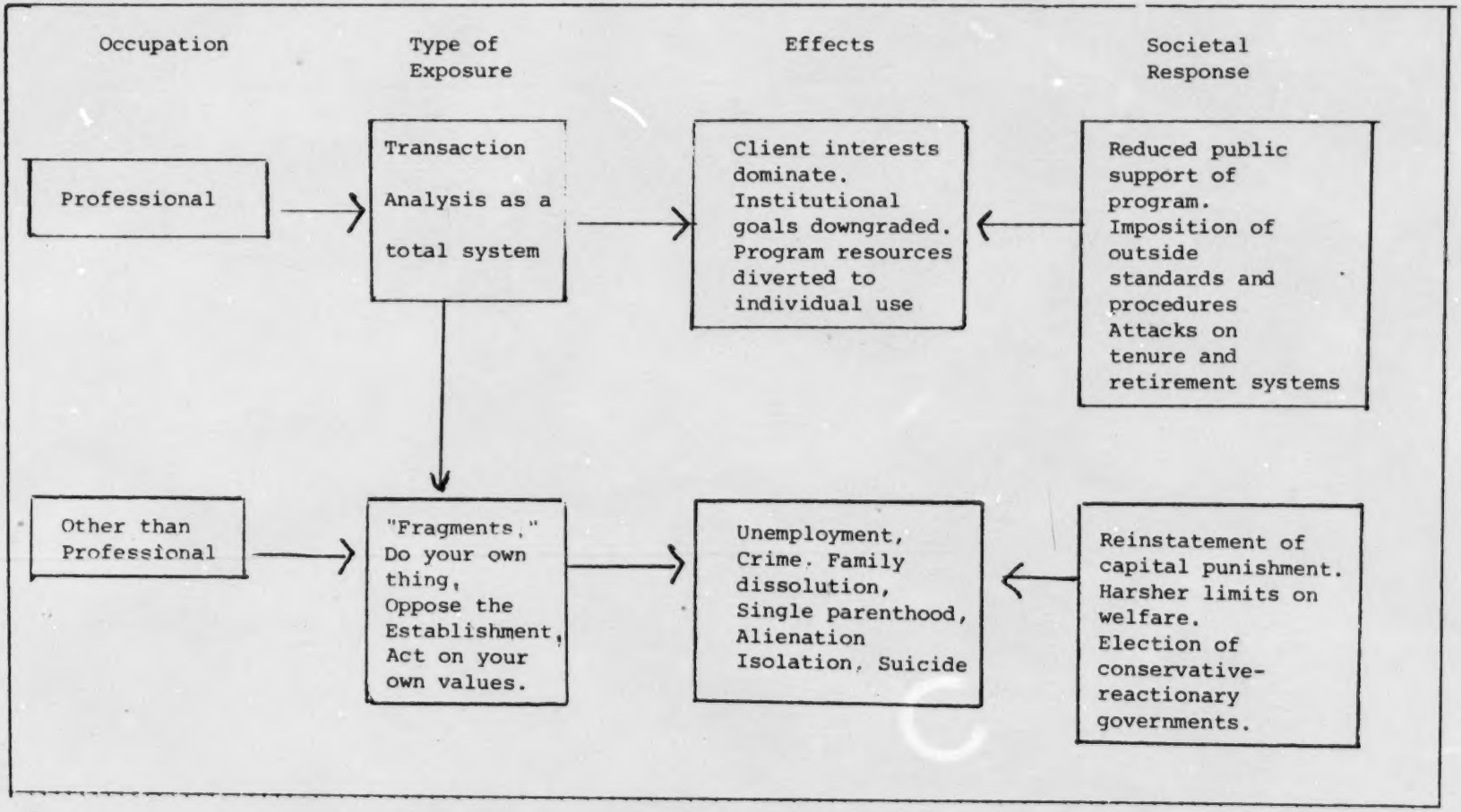
In conclusion, my general objective has been to challenge family and other behavioral science scholars to extend Choice and Exchange Theory to it intellectual limits. I hope we will soon see papers addressing the task of integrating related mini theories into this theoretical paradigm, that we will see many substantive research projects which start with a review of the broad substance-free propostions and basic concepts of Choice and Exchange Theory, proceeding to the deduction of significant research hypotheses. Also, I hope that we will see ambitious papers rethinking Structure-Functionalism, Conflict Theory and systems theory in Choice and Exchange terms.

Are we at a point where a truly general theory of behavior and social structure can be developed? It is too soon to give an answer. If we are, the task of explicating it is in the beginning stages, and the task of applying it to substantive issues may never be complete (the issues may increase at a faster rate than the theory). But Choice and Exchange Theory does offer a challenge to try to integrate present research findings and to deduce significant hypotheses to guide future research -- research which addressed the issues and which, in turn, tests, redirects, and expands the theory.

Is a Theory of Choice and Exchange the key to addressing the theoretical issues of social behavior and social structure? I will not attempt to answer that question for the reader. What is to be hoped will occur is that an increased number of theoretically curious professionals will investigate the merits of the issue for themselves.

I have given some thought to the theory and have tried to apply it not only in the dyad but to social structures and the interplay between individuals and organizations. On the basis of present exposure to the broad concepts and propositions of the theory, in my own mind the answer is "Yes" -- it is the key that can open the doors which can lead to a broad, reasonably integrated development of behavioral science, including, but not limited to, the theoretical understanding of the family.

Figure I. HYPOTHESIZED EFFECTS OF A MAJOR PARADIGM ON SOCIETY AND SOME HYPOTHESIZED RESPONSES OF SOCIETY


Occupation
Type of Exposure
Effects
Societal Response
Professional
Transaction Analysis as a total system
Client interests dominate. Institutional goals downgraded. Program resources diverted to individual use
Reduced public support of program. Imposition of outside standards and procedures Attacks on tenure and retirement systems
Other than Professional
"Fragments," Do your own thing, Oppose the Establishment, Act on your own values.
Unemployment, Crime. Family dissolution, Single parenthood, Alienation Isolation, Suicide
Reinstatement of capital punishment. Harsher limits on welfare. Election of conservative-reactionary governments.

FOOTNOTES

1. Actually, the volume contains many, sometimes contradictory messages. After devoting many pages to outlining a course of moral relativism, he denounces it. Thus, the reader can select his/her own "bill of faire."

2. Unlimited individualism is defined here as actions which do not provide protection for the rights of others. The more aggressive types of individualism have been termed "arrogant individualism" (Mace, 1977).

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